



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

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COMMERCIAL FISHING REGULATIONS FOR ALASKA ISSUED FOR 1957

Changes in the Alaska commercial fishing regulations to be effective during the 1957 season were made public today by Assistant Secretary of the Interior Ross L. Leffler. These regulations will become effective 30 days after publication in the Federal Register.

The area registration provisions, instituted in 1956, which prohibited movement of salmon fishing boats and nets from one area to another, proved effective and will be continued under the new regulations, Mr. Leffler said.

Highlights of the regulations as considered by areas shows that the fishing gear timetable of control used in Bristol Bay in 1956 will be continued and expanded. One new feature in Bristol Bay is that the picking of salmon from gill nets is deemed to be a part of the fishing operation and must be performed by the fisherman to whom the gear is legally registered.

In the Alaska Peninsula area gear timetable control will be applied in the Bear River district. Only the fishing time to be allowed at the opening of the season will be affected. Weekly adjustments are not provided for. A relaxation in the northeastern district will permit purse seines to be used as far east as the entrance to Port Heiden, after July 10. The July 10 date has been specified to insure that Bristol Bay red salmon runs will have passed that area before the season opens. On the south side of the Alaska Peninsula the pink salmon season will close August 2 because of anticipated smaller runs of pink salmon.

In the Chignik area the closed waters at the inner end of the lagoon have been increased to prevent over-fishing there at low tide. To reduce the fishing effort further, all traps in the area have been closed for 1957, and the weekly closed period has been split so as to provide more even escapement of salmon to the spawning grounds.

The main change in the Kodiak area is the elimination of the midseason closure during the pink salmon season. This relaxation will be offset by an increase in the weekly closed periods, designed to provide more even distribution of escapements. Minor changes include the creation of the Olga-Moser Bay section

of the Alitak district so that protection to the red runs there can be applied without affecting the pink salmon runs in Alitak Bay, and the creation of the Sturgeon River district to permit harvesting chum runs to the Sturgeon River without affecting the runs of red salmon to Red River.

In Cook Inlet gear timetable control during the red salmon season from July 1 to July 27, will be applied. It will be of the type designed for the Bear River district in the Alaska Peninsula. As in Bristol Bay, during the July 1 - July 27 season gill nets will be required to be picked by the crews to whom registered. In addition, the regulations have been rewritten to close areas where set nets are not now used in order to prevent any expansion in the use of that type of gear.

In Prince William Sound the season will not close until August 10. However, in order to limit the fishery, in view of the mediocre runs expected, fishing will be controlled by reductions in gear. Essentially, gear reduction in 1957 is to be accomplished by voluntary closure of all but 11 of the 42 traps; increases in closed areas in a number of bays; and gear timetable control of purse seines based on 135 seines. The closing date of the seasons will be advanced according to the timetable if there is any increase in seines above that number.

The only significant change for the Yakutat area is an increase in the weekly closed periods prior to August 11 to afford greater protection to the red salmon runs because of a continuing increase in the amount of gear in that area.

Southeastern Alaska will have essentially the same pink salmon conservation program which has been in effect since 1954 and has shown promising results.

Two major changes were made in the gill-net fisheries. The first is to provide for limited use of gill nets at Lake, Salmon, and Red Bays to harvest the red salmon runs which have not been tapped in recent years.

Burroughs Bay will be closed to fishing this year. This fishery has been criticized because king salmon taken there are consistently of poor quality and it is felt that these mature fish should be protected for escapement purposes. The waters of Portland Canal have been opened to the use of gill nets. The International Boundary between Alaska and Canada runs down the middle of Portland Canal and on the Canadian side of the line the use of gill nets is permitted. The regulations, as written, will now provide identical seasons on both sides.

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